

child. Our mission is to ensure that our children are among the best educated in the world, and we will not be dissuaded from accomplishing that goal by any amount of opposition.

Today, we are introducing the Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999 to build on the Successes of the 105th Congress, and to jump start the much needed debate on increasing the ability of our nation's children to obtain a quality education.

The Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999 is a broad effort to offer new reforms to K-12 education, and provide incentives for families to save for higher education. It is made up of several titles:

Title I—the Education savings Account Act of 1999—Under this title, parents will have more control over their children's education through IRA-style savings accounts that allow parents to save money tax-free for elementary and secondary education expenses. This legislation allows parents, grandparents, or scholarship sponsors to contribute up to \$2,000 (post-tax dollars) a year per child for educational expenses while at public, private, religious or home schools—from kindergarten through high school. Last year, this proposal passed both the House and the Senate, but was vetoed by President Clinton.

Title II—Dollars to the Classroom Act—consolidates over 30 separate education programs and sends the money directly to state and local officials to be used to improve educational achievement and learning. The bill requires that 95% of federal education dollars are spent on classroom activities, rather than Washington based bureaucracies.

Title III—Merit Act—provides for an incentive grant program for States to establish and administer periodic teacher testing and merit pay programs for elementary and secondary school teachers.

Title IV—Additional Funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education—provides additional funding to states to meet the federal mandate under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Title V—K-12 Community Participation Act—amends the IRS code to allow for a tax credit for elementary and secondary school expenses and for charitable contributions to organizations which provide scholarship to attend private schools. The maximum credit allow is up to \$200 per person in 1999; \$150 in 2000; \$200 in 2001; and \$250 thereafter.

Title VI—Collegiate Learning and Student Savings—extends tax-free treatment to all accumulations of interests and withdrawals from pre-paid college tuition plans.

With the Educational Opportunities and Excellence Act of 1999, we want to lead the Congress in taking the first steps necessary to improve educational opportunities dramatically for every American child. Our agenda—parental

control and involvement, dollars to the classroom, state and local authority, and a return to basic academics—will be fully embraced by parents, teachers and administrators, governors and mayors across the country.●

#### THE AIR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, earlier this week, I joined the Chairman and Ranking Democrat on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in introducing the Air Transportation Improvement Act. While I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation, I am sorry that we are in the position of introducing a bill that should have been passed last year. Due to a number of unfortunate circumstances, including the unqualified mess at the end of the 105th Congress where 8 out of the 13 appropriations bills had to be lumped into a single massive bill, the Congress failed to complete its duty to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and related programs in the regular order of doing business. As a result, the FAA and important infrastructure programs such as the Airport Improvement Programs, were only extended until the end of March 1999. Thus, we are forced to begin the new Congress by taking up last year's business.

The FAA bill introduced yesterday needs to be one of the first priorities of this Congress. This is the case not only because of the pressing deadline of the short term extension, but also because this legislation contains some very important policy initiatives that will inject more airline competition and improve air service to small communities. While I support the general thrust of this legislation, I still believe that we need to consider some adjustments to this legislation. In particular, I believe that the Small Community Air Service Development Program established under this legislation is too modest in size to have much of an impact. Since the deregulation of the airline industry two decades ago, hundreds of small communities have experienced service degradation and many have lost service altogether. Vast geographic regions of our country have suffered unacceptable geographic isolation as the airlines have withdrawn service in smaller communities. This trend needs the serious attention of the Congress and the Department of Transportation.

Thanks to the bipartisan cooperation on this legislation among the leadership of the Senate Commerce Committee, we have developed the Small Community Air Service Development Program which could go a long way to address the small community air service problems. However, the authorization level proposed in the legislation introduced yesterday does not provide adequate enough resources for this demonstration program to make much of a

difference. I hope that as the Commerce Committee works on this bill that we will be able to increase the authorization levels for this important new program.

I also realize that there is some serious controversy surrounding some provisions in this bill. It is my hope that we will be able to reach some fair compromises over the contentious provisions and that this bill will pass the Congress in very short order.

I want to commend Chairman MCCAIN and Senator HOLLINGS for their leadership on this legislation. I know that there is a strong desire on both sides of the aisle to work on this legislation and pass it as soon as possible.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DAVID W. DENNIS

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to a much-loved and respected Hoosier statesman, David Worth Dennis, who passed away on January 6, 1999, at the age of 86. David Dennis represented the eastern section of the State of Indiana in the United States House of Representatives from 1969 to 1975. He served with great courage and distinction on the House Judiciary Committee during the difficult Watergate period.

David Dennis' commitment to public service began before and extended beyond his three terms in the House of Representatives. After his graduation from Earlham College and Harvard Law School, he began his career practicing law in Richmond, Indiana. He then served as the prosecuting attorney for Wayne County, Indiana, and then as a First Lieutenant in the JAG Corps of the U.S. Army. He served in the Pacific theater at the end of World War II. Shortly after he came home to Indiana in 1946, he won a seat in the Indiana General Assembly, where he served a total of four terms.

I first met Dave during his service in the Indiana House of Representatives, and I frequently corresponded with him during his United States Congressional service. I was pushing the extension of the "New Federalism," in which states and cities obtained and exercised more responsibility. I also was advocating general revenue sharing in which the federal government would send money to states and cities without strings attached in order that the discharge of these additional responsibilities could be paid for. Dave was enthusiastic about diminishing federal prerogatives, but somewhat less enthusiastic about a distribution of federal revenues.

Our coming together on the campaign trail in 1974 led to enormous mutual respect. The Judiciary Committee was a battleground for efforts to impeach President Richard Nixon. Dave was a very loyal Republican but, even more importantly, he was a scholarly and thoughtful legislator who believed that insufficient evidence had been produced to vote for articles of impeachment in the Committee. As additional evidence withheld by President